2: Batchelor M-5 (1877-1924) 1927
AB6 Ainu AB6

331 342 In building their dwellings, the people begin not "with the top brick of the chimney," but with the roof. This consists of bare rafters tied to horizontal poles at the lower end and a long ridge-pole at the upper, to which the thatch is fixed. The inner layers of bark, especially of elm trees, and pieces of vine and creeping plants are used as rope and string for tying the poles together. As soon as the roof is finished, poles about seven feet long (of magnolia by preference, on account of its supposed durability) are driven into the earth at a distance of about six feet apart, and across these smaller pieces of wood are lashed, to which the thatch is tied; and thus the walls are formed. These poles have each a fork in the top. When they are all set up in their places, the roof is lifted bodily on to them, the lower horizontal poles being allowed to rest in the forks at the top of the uprights. The thatching is then proceeded with. This takes a day or two to finish, for the huts are entirely thatched with reeds, right from the ridge-poles on the roof to the foot of the poles stuck in the earth. Both men and women work at house-
[462 building, in which I have also sometimes joined for the
221] fun of the thing, and the spring and autumn were the proper times for this occupation.

342 When the framework of the house has been set up and the "heart" fixed properly in its appointed place, a preliminary house-warming festival takes place, at which prayer is said, dumplings eaten and either millet beer or Japanese *saké* partaken of. The first prayer is as follows:—

342 788 782 "O House God! O Caretaker of the Room! we worship Thee; we beseech Thee to hear us. In olden times, when the Goddess of Fire was sent down from Heaven, a house came down with her. The frame was made of wood and the walls of reeds. The heart also was there. Now, when God sent the building down, He said, 'This house will, together with the Goddess of Fire, watch over the people. When it becomes old,